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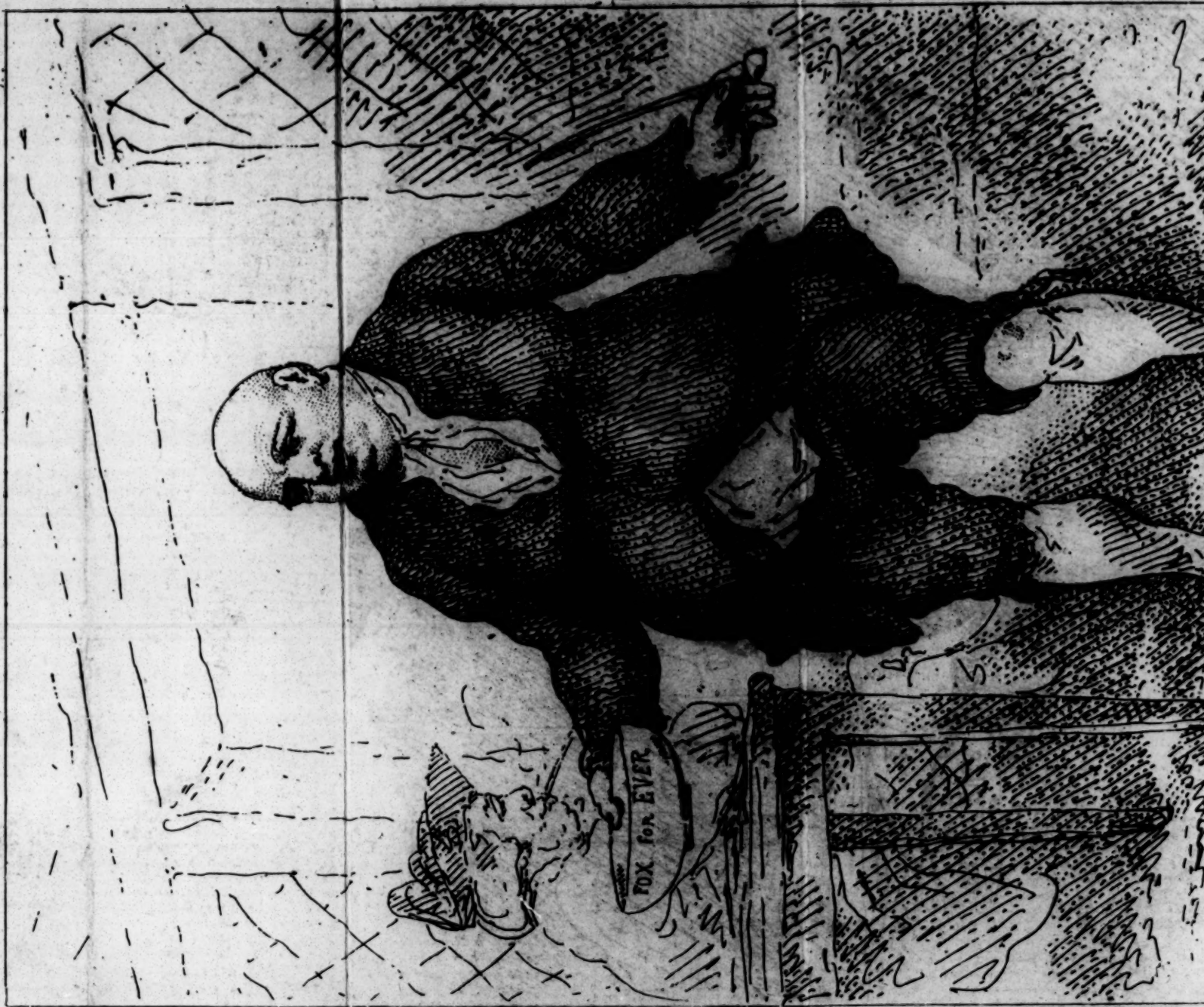
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Published for the Life of Sam House

THE
L I F E
AND
POLITICAL OPINIONS
OF THE LATE
S A M H O U S E;
INTERSPERSED WITH CURIOUS
ANECDOTES AND AMOROUS INTRIGUES
OF THIS
SINGULAR AND DISTINGUISHED CHARACTER.

Published by Authority, from authentic Documents.

*No man always a fool,
Every man sometimes.*

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N,

Printed for the Author by C. BUCKTON, Great Pultney-
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[Price ONE SHILLING.]

THE
F. I. E.
AND

POLITICAL OPINIONS

OF THE LATE

SAMUEL JOHNSON

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AND HIS AMONGST HIS

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DEDICATION.

TO THE SOCIETY OF CONSTITUTIONAL WHIGS.

GENTLEMEN,

TO dedicate to you, the MEMOIRS of a MAN, with whom you were intimately acquainted, and of whose zeal and activity in the cause of Freedom you had the most convincing proofs, is a tribute due to your laudable exertions, your spirited firmness, and determined perseverance in the same cause.

The materials of which the following historical outlines are composed,
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ed, are not the conjectures of fancy, but founded on facts, communicated to the Editor, by persons, who, for many years lived with Mr. HOUSE in the strictest intimacy of friendship.

That coolness and moderation, steadiness of temper, and a disposition to promote the general interests of mankind, may govern you in all your proceedings, is the sincere wish of your

Most obedient,

and very humble servant,

The EDITOR.

M E M O I R S

O F

MR. SAMUEL HOUSE.

THOUGH an attempt to transmit to posterity, the life of a man, whose highest situation was that of a *publican*, may appear, not only strange, but unnecessary; yet it has frequently happened, that men of low rank and birth, have raised themselves to the highest places of power and trust; and by artifice created convulsions in States, which have terminated in revolutions.

Whilst others, by a proper and well directed exertion of their natural faculties, have done honor to themselves, and rendering essential service to society, immortalized their names, and

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raised

raised monuments to their memory, of respect and imitation. To record the destructive artifices and treacherous actions of the former, that their conduct might be held up to universal derision and contempt, has always been considered laudable ; it is no less commendable to transmit the patriotic spirit and benevolent actions of those, whose love of liberty and general philanthropy, rendered their lives conspicuous. Of the latter description, together with many personal foibles and peculiarities, was the person we are about to treat of.

Mankind being formed for society, each individual has a share of anxiety or pleasure, proportionate to his natural disposition or situation in life. When the mind reserves a direction to any particular object, it proceeds from certain opinions formed at an early period, or from habits and modes of thinking, acquired from associating with particular descriptions of men.

Sentiments thus formed, when they become deeply rooted and ingrafted in the constitution ; whether well or ill - founded, acquire strength, and though wrong in the principle ; yet so strong and forcible is prejudice, that, contrary to reason, sound sense, and experience, the

the mind too often fortifies itself against conviction, and shuts out every argument which may counteract a favorite opinion.

Such is the unaccountable disposition of human nature, governed too frequently by whim and caprice, without having any solid or rational ground to justify it; yet, when the opinions and peculiarities of individuals are not hurtful to community, and have no other effect, than rendering the person singular; these foibles are not an object of censure.

But opinions, founded on sound constitutional principles, supported with firmness and vigour; added to these, a benevolence of heart, a free, generous, and open spirit; even detraction itself, must forgive the foibles, frailties, and imperfections of such a character.

In the present undertaking, we shall not imitate the practice of modern historians, by giving fabricated genealogical conjectures; or, pretend to give the pedigree of *Samuel House*; the reader must content himself with being informed, that his father kept a public-house, in Petty France, Westminster, where his son, SAM, the subject of this history, was born.

Affisted only with a slender education, at the usual age, he was put apprentice to the late

Mr. Peavy, House-cooper, in Bembridge-street, St. Giles's; but his master being cruel in his disposition, (like many others) had no mercy upon his servants, and made him work frequently until one o'clock in the morning, when, by violent labour, he strained his arm, which continued contracted until his death. On reflection, this tyrant, considering he should have him to provide for, now being incapable of working *double tides*, wisely, with a *shew* of humanity, gave him up his indentures; and, at the age of eighteen, the world was all before him *to choose a place of rest, and Providence his guide.*

The ill usage he experienced in his first situation as an apprentice (for he often cursed his master's memory) probably made him that implacable enemy to tyranny and oppression, which he continued to exemplify through the future period of his life.

In the capacity of a House-cooper, we next hear of him at the Peacock Brewhouse, Whitecross-street; where, he did not continue long. He afterwards engaged himself at Mr. Green's Brewhouse, at Pimlico, and from his assiduity in business, he obtained the place of an, a-broad cooper.

About this time, near the age of twenty, he
contracted

contracted an intimacy with a married woman, but she not living with her husband, SAM was unacquainted with her matrimonial engagement, till her death, which happened a short time after. This woman was very fond of him, and, as love begets love, accounts for his affection to her; though she was near forty, and not remarkably handsome, he has been heard to declare “ *he loved her like his mother.*”

As he was ignorant of her marriage, so he did not know that she was possessed of any property till her decease, when to his surprize she left him one hundred pounds, half of which sum he laid out among his indigent acquaintance, presenting them with clothes, &c. An early and noble instance of his generosity.

We find also, that he was an a-broad cooper, at Mason's Brewhouse, St. Giles's, and at Camberon's at Hampstead; but we have heard nothing to relate remarkable, until by his industry he acquired money sufficient to take a public-house, in a street, called the Gravel-Pits, near Berwick-Street, Soho; he was then twenty-four or twenty-five years of age.

About this period, he rendered himself the subject of general conversation, for some time, by undertaking, for a considerable wager, to leap off Westminster-bridge into the river Thames.

Thames. This he engaged to do against any Newfoundland dog that should be brought.

Notice having been given of the day when this extraordinary attempt was to be made, the public curiosity was much excited; of course, a prodigious concourse of people assembled, the greatest part of whom conceived, that they should witness a man, wearied of life, under this pretence, put an end to his own existence in the most public manner.

At the time appointed, SAM, with his friends made their appearance; having reached the top of the bridge, a circle was formed for the adventurer to undress, which being done, he got upon the ballustrades of the centre arch, and with the most apparent indifference, threw himself into the river, and swam on shore, without receiving the least injury.—An example, we doubt, if either of the aerial *potentates*, *Lunardi*, *Blanchard*, or *Zembeccari*, with all their *puffing*, would dare to follow.

This singular feat of activity, by every one thought impossible, without occasioning immediate death, rendered him a popular character, and filled his house with customers. SAM not insensible to public approbation, now considered himself of some consequence, though in the humble station of a publican.

It

It is truly astonishing, that, in this metropolis, the most ridiculous undertaking, attended with the most apparent dangerous consequences to the adventurer, thousands will collect to witness, what they apprehend may prove, the immediate destruction of an individual. Some possess more sensibility of heart than others, which appeared on this occasion ; from what SAM has often told, when relating the circumstance of this adventure.

“ D—n my eyes,” said he, “ when I was stripping to *buff*, there was a decent woman kept looking at me all the time ; I’ll be d—’d if she was not a modest woman for all that, but she would not stir, nor take her eye off me, till I had pulled off my breeches, and then she fainted away.”

Having established his character as a man of resolution and courage, he prudently considered *that it was not fit he should be alone*. To guard against the violence of youthful passions, and secure himself from being ensnared by the artful allurements of prostitution ; in the prime of life, possessed of a sound, healthy constitution, and every requisite “ *that speaks home to the female heart* ;” he determined to enter into the state of matrimony. An opportunity soon offered.

ferred. His maid-servant, was cleanly, modest, and remarkably plain in her dress, which perfectly accorded with his taste.

Sobriety and industry were charms much more captivating with SAM, than beauty, dress, family, or fortune—without ceremony, for ceremony he always despised, he offered her his hand and heart :—she, with the utmost good-nature, instantly accepted the proposal, and the matrimonial bond was solemnized in due and legal form. This union, in a short time, produced a pledge of their mutual affection, his wife being delivered of a son, the present Mr. Samuel House.

SAM, being now happy in himself and family, became a bird-fancier. In this species of amusement he took much delight, and arrived at great perfection in a proper choice of birds, and was allowed, by connoisseurs in this article, to be a good judge. Some birds he disposed of very advantageously, and it is said by this traffic he cleared near £.100 *per* year.

He likewise obtained several prizes by shewing them at the annual club, which was held at his house ; however, the money, acquired by this means, he never applied to his own use, but

but distributed it, where he thought it was most wanted—among his acquaintance and servants. —Ye sons of avarice, read this, and imitate so laudable an example.

As no human happiness is complete, poor SAM discovered that the charms of the bottle attracted his wife's attention *in a peculiar manner*. Though he was a votary to the jolly god Bacchus, yet he would not suffer his *Cara sposa* to be a worshipper: in vain were all his remonstrances, each day her attachment was increased to the *Idol*. At length he was under the necessity of putting her away, with an allowance of £.20 *per Annum*. In this situation, she became so enamoured with her favourite *deity*, that it soon overcame her, and put a period to her existence.

Reader!—whether thou art male or female, pause a moment—reflect on the melancholy consequences of drunkenness. Like a pestilence, it blasts every comfort of life;—changes beauty into ugliness and deformity;—weakens the understanding, destroys the animal powers, and dissolves every tie of social and natural affection. It renders those who before, were objects of love and esteem, that of hatred and disgust.

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Ye

Ye lovely fair—endowed with the most delicate sensations ;—formed by nature to sweeten the comforts, and alleviate the sorrows of life, who wish to preserve the affection of your husbands, and your own reputation in society, avoid with the utmost caution this baneful and pernicious evil.

To return from this digression.—SAM, to supply the loss of his wife, took the woman who suckled his son, to be his housekeeper. Being plain and industrious, these qualities recommended her to his notice ; and, distinguished by the name of *Nurse*, she lived with him on terms the most familiar until his death.

This intercourse produced a fine girl, who is now at boarding-school, about thirteen years of age, to whom, as also as her mother, SAM has left £. 20 *per Annum*, during their lives.

Having given a short account of his family concerns, we now proceed to take a view of his political life. Though a man of no education, yet he possessed a good natural understanding, and frequently formed very just conceptions of men and things. Whether it proceeded from the cruelty of his master, as we before observed, or from its own injustice, he had a strong aversion to every species of tyranny and oppression. In

In the year 1763, he commenced politician, and took a very active part in support of *Wilkes and Liberty*.

During this violent struggle, SAM sold his beer at three-pence a pot, in honour of Wilkes, the then champion of freedom; and at his own expence gave entertainments to his neighbours, and others, who he thought were friends to the same cause. It is said his exertions in the election for Middlesex, on the side of the popular candidate, did not cost him less than £.500.

His generous and open conduct did not pass unnoticed—refusing to receive any recompence, a number of freeholders ordered a dinner at his house. At one of these meetings, Mr. Wilkes presided. Though SAM was not a wit, yet he had a *quaint* manner of expressing himself, which would sometimes create mirth; but this day he set the table in a roar.

Being called upon for a toast, he gave Mr. Wilkes, (and directing himself to that gentleman) added, “ *I hope, Johnny, you’ll always look straight.*”

At another time, which will serve as a counterpart to that we have already related; and, as a striking instance of his political discernment;

previous to the dissolution of the last Parliament, being in conversation with Mr. Byng, he observed, that he was sure “ Jack Wilkes *squinted the wrong way.*” Mr. Byng, not suspecting Mr. Wilkes to have deserted the old cause, could not give credit to the assertion; but SAM insisted he was right; and at one of the following Hackney meetings took an opportunity of telling Mr. Wilkes—“ *D—n me, Johnny, you squint the wrong way,*” following him to his carriage, and shewing every mark of disapprobation.

HE rendered himself no less conspicuous for his attachment to what he called *liberty*, than his personal oddities, particularly in his dress, which was not only singular, but laughably ridiculous. We cannot fix the time this uniformity took place; but many living characters remember him for thirty years in the dress we are about to describe.

His person was not tall, but of the middling size, he was well made, stout, and active. His head was quite bald, without the appearance of hair, never having had much in his youth; without hat or wig, if he wore a hat, which was seldom, it had a very broad brim. It may literally be said, he had not a coat to his back, for
he

he was not seen wearing a coat near thirty years—a black waistcoat, with sleeves, was its substitute; he was always clean in his linen, which was of the best kind, but never buttoned his shirt at the collar; his breeches were of the same sort and colour of the waistcoat, and open at the knees; silk stockings of the best sort, either white or mottled, decorated his legs, which were deemed handsome by the ladies; but he frequently went without stockings, and either with or without, wore a neat pair of black slippers.

This was his uniform dress, upon all occasions, both at home and abroad, without any regard to seasons, company, situation, or rank of those with whom he had occasion to associate.

When abroad the oddity of his appearance drew the attention of the populace.—Going one day into a part of the town where he was not known, only by report, the boys, who are the first to take notice of any thing remarkable in passengers, began to make him the object of their sport; his patience was tired out in bearing their tricks and insults. When calling a coach, he ordered the man to drive to his house, swearing in his usual way, “ that it was d—’d
“ hard

“ hard a man could not dress as he pleased for
 “ the benefit of his health, without being treat-
 “ ed like a madman.”

Though austere in his manners, and unre-
 fined in his discourse, yet, he felt for the suf-
 ferings of the unfortunate, and seemed to pos-
 sess a considerable portion of the “ milk of hu-
 “ man kindness.” Few perhaps in the station
 of life he was in, contributed more towards al-
 leviating the distresses of others. Though an
 enthusiast in politics, yet political opinions were
 not the test of his benevolence; but he extend-
 ed his liberality indiscriminately to real objects
 of compassion.

He frequently walked in the morning to the
 Horse Guards, where he was well-known, and
 instantly attended by a number of the soldiers,
 surrounding the old woman’s breakfast-table ;
 here he treated as many as chose to partake of
 what they call “ *Bow wow Pie*,” a coarse kind
 of pastry and beef. She had always plenty of
 customers when SAM appeared, who paid for
 all. Observing the keenness of their appetite,
 he would, “ D—n Government for obliging
 “ the poor fellows (as he said) to be *beaus*,
 “ when their guts were fighting for the first
 “ morsel that went down their throats.”

An

An honest man was his delight. Many whom he believed of that description have experienced his friendship with loans of £.20, £.50, or £.100. If repaid at the fixed time, which, without taking any other security than their word, he left to themselves, they retained his good opinion; but if they failed in their engagement, they forfeited his favour. For these civilities he never took any interest, nor would he suffer the borrower to treat him on discharging the debt; but if he sat down to drink with him, according to a custom he invariably observed, in whatever company he sat down with that came to his house, he paid an equal share of the reckoning.

Notwithstanding the private concerns of his family, and the attention which he paid to the political opinions of the day, he had nothing in his composition of philosophical absorption to deny himself of every enjoyment but those of his favourite pursuits. He possessed in a high degree, those delicate sensations, incident to human nature, and tender feelings towards the fair sex. When an opportunity offered, he was ever ready to do them a kindness in *their own way*. One of his amorous exploits he often told with much good humour. It cannot
bear

bear the appellation of *intrigue*, both the word and its meaning he was a perfect stranger to.

The story, which, he prefaced, in his usual way with several oaths, vouching its authenticity, is as follows :

He called one evening to pay a visit to an old acquaintance, who, though not in affluent circumstances, always received his friends with a hearty welcome. After the usual compliments when *gentlemen* meet, they sat down to refresh themselves with a cool tankard of porter, in company with the wife, and as a token of regard for each other, they all got *drunk*. It being late when SAM got up to take his leave, they perswaded him to stay and take part of their bed, which he accepted, and after another pot or two of old English Burgundy, to bed they went. SAM declared he knew not how he got to bed, nor on which side he lay till the morning, but it was the *right side for business*. In the morning he was awaked by the wife bawling to her husband for small-beer, and complaining she was dry. SAM seconded the motion, and said *he was dry too*. His old companion thought it a good opportunity to give him a further proof of his friendship, by shewing his readiness to oblige him, and went
to

to the cellar for the beer, leaving SAM and his wife together.

SAM at this time was a comely young fellow; and, to use his own expression, "*could pay a bill at sight.*" What passed between him and the woman we cannot state, but on the husband's return from the cellar, he observed to his wife, "Why, you are dry indeed, my dear, you pant like a hare!"—*The wife, having satisfied nature, through the indulgence of her husband,* gave the pot to SAM, who said—"Come, here's to our next merry meeting." The happy couple replied, *una voce*, Amen.

With regard to the political sentiments of SAM HOUSE, he was uniform in support of the rights of the people, in opposition to the influence of the Crown. At the Election for Westminster in the year 1780, when the contest was violent between Lord Lincoln, supported by the Court, and Mr. Fox, supported by the People; he exerted every nerve in favour of the latter, and erected the Standard of Liberty at his own expence, for the Sons of Freedom to regale themselves with beef, beer, &c. During the poll he headed a considerable number of Electors every day to the hustings, who gave their suffrages for Mr. Fox.

D

When

When Lord Lincoln, with some of his friends, were canvassing, SAM was likewise employed in the same business for his friend Fox. The two parties happening to meet, a gentleman pointed him out to his Lordship, who immediately offered SAM his hand, asking him of his health, &c. The Liberty Boy replied, " I'll shake hands with you ; but I'll be d—'d " if I don't do you all the mischief I can."

His activity and disinterested conduct during this election, recommended him to the notice and attention of Mr. Fox and his friends. It was reported, that during the Portland Administration, his Grace sent for SAM HOUSE, and asked him, if he could do any thing for him or his family ; but SAM, with his characteristic honest bluntness, expressed in language not the most elegant, replied, he wanted nothing, he was as rich as any of them ; and as for his son*, he must do as his father had done before him—(work for his living)— he would accept of no favour.

* A report still prevails, that the Duke of Portland gave the son an appointment in the Customs of £.200 *per* year, but this is totally without foundation, he having worked at Calvert's brewhouse, in Thames-street, as a cooper, until his father's death.

SAM

SAM recollecting the violent stretch of power in oppressing Mr. Wilkes, and that gentleman's manly exertions in defence of freedom; that, though by his opposition, he rendered himself obnoxious to the Court; yet, through firmness and perseverance, overcame every obstacle, and gave a mortal stab to that destructive influence in a glorious triumph.

Finding this baneful influence again raising its head, to the injury of our dearest and most essential interests, induced him to lay aside every personal consideration, and risk his fortune in support of Mr. Fox, who, he admired for his firm and steady opposition to the American war, and other ruinous measures during Lord North's Administration.

To the uncommon abilities of Mr. Fox, and his friends, their fortitude and perseverance, we are indebted for the annihilation of that Ministry, which, had it continued in the pursuit of those measures, would have effectually ruined Old England. This was SAM's creed, and impressed his mind more and more with the integrity of Mr. Fox, and his ability to do his country an essential service. And, notwithstanding the various intrigues and changes that happened, SAM always thought, that if Mr. Fox would

make a proper use of his talents, he was the only man he knew that could rescue his country from impending ruin.

When political reasons made it necessary for Mr. Fox to unite with Lord North, SAM's confidence in Mr. Fox was shook to the centre. Mr. Fox's friends took much pains to reconcile him to the *Coalition*, but without effect; though they justified Mr. Fox's conduct, yet, they never could prevail on SAM to consider Lord North a friend to his country. However, he continued his exertions in favour of Mr. Fox, whose seat was vacated on coming into office with Lord North; and there is little doubt, but the superiority he gained over his opponents is, in a great measure, to be ascribed to SAM's zeal and activity.

Dr, JEBB, wishing to introduce Mr. Churchill as a candidate for Westminster, took great pains to make SAM a convert to his political sentiments. He sounded him on several strings; but the music was harsh and dissonant. The Doctor finding his rhetoric had no effect, consigned him to the management of his LADY; who, with Mrs. Churchill, took an active part in the politics of that day, and frequently honoured SAM with an audience. Every man is acquainted with the
irresistible

irresistable *influence of the ladies*, if not with *secret influence*. Mrs. JEBB made use of all her eloquence on this occasion, and might have prevailed with any other man; but SAM continued inflexible.

In the end, she said, it was her opinion, that some worthy tradesman in Westminster ought to be elected instead of Mr. Fox; and added, "Mr. HOUSE, what do you think of Mr. Churchill for your member?"—This was a thunderbolt to SAM, and, like an electric shock, struck him speechless; but soon recovering himself, he, with an *English* oath, made a *French* retreat, and never after honoured them with another visit. The junto finding their scheme would not go down with SAM, whose interest in Westminster would turn the scale against them, if they persisted in their project, determined that Lord Hood should be put up in opposition to Mr. Fox.

Till now SAM and CHURCHILL were upon good terms, when an unlucky visit, confirmed SAM in his suspicion of Churchill's duplicity, and at once dissolved their political friendship. A day or two after his visit at Dr. JEBB's, SAM called upon CHURCHILL, with a, how-do-ye-do, and found him in conference with some characters

ters he did not like. However, not regarding their resentment, he asked Churchill what sort of company he kept? Churchill's *conscience* was awake in an instant, and feeling the whole force of the allusion, he replied with some warmth, "You're an ungrateful man;" which produced the following remark from SAM, "Your playing a double game Jackey, but I'll be d—d if your phyfic shall operate in Westminster."

It may not be improper to insert a circumstance, during the election, which fully evinces his disinterested motives. At a general meeting of the friends of Mr. Fox at the *Shakespeare Tavern, Covent-Garden*, the company (being so numerous) could not be accommodated in one room, but were obliged to be divided: Mr. Byng was called to the chair. Amongst other toasts, a gentleman proposed to give SAM HOUSE. On which Mr. Byng said, he was exceeding happy in the opportunity of expressing his hearty concurrence, in paying respect to a man, who had, on many occasions distinguished himself a warm friend to liberty.—He begged leave, he said, to mention an instance of genuine and disinterested patriotism, which he could relate from his own knowledge, a circumstance

cumstance that would have done honour to the first character in this country. SAM observing, that the influence of the Court, would, if possible, prevent the electors of Westminster from having the Man of their choice, without any solicitation opened his house. The friends of Mr. Fox seeing the profusion of SAM, were afraid, that through his uncommon zeal in the cause of freedom, he would injure himself, determined them to make him a recompence; but knowing his greatness of soul and independent spirit, the difficulty was, to do it in such a way, not to hurt his feelings. It was agreed, that a quantity of beer and spirits should be sent him, to supply what he had given away. Mr. Byng, and some other friends, waited upon SAM, and acquainted him with this resolution; when, said Mr. Byng, what do you think was his answer? (with the calmness of a philosopher, and an expressive look of disdain, considering it an insult to offer him a recompence) “*You may be d——’d.*”

Notwithstanding his interest in Westminster, and the familiarity which his spirited conduct created with people of the first character, yet he never obtained a favour but the following.

A hackney coachman with whom he was acquainted,

quainted, requested SAM to procure him a figure for a coach—SAM promised to use his endeavours; and succeeding in his application, presented the figure to the coachman, who, to express his gratitude, offered him two guineas; but the present was refused with this reproof. “D—n bribery, when I serve a friend I want no interest*.”

We have already mentioned, that during the late convulsions in the Cabinet—When different descriptions of men found it necessary to join their interests, SAM was ready to conclude, that he had all along been deceived; that there was no real patriotism to be found amongst those who pretended to have the interest of the country at heart. Though Mr. Fox’s conduct did not appear in the most favourable light to SAM, and was far from giving him satisfaction, yet, he still believed him to be honest; and this persuasion, it is presumed, stimulated him to exert himself in the manner he did at the late election.

It is worth remarking, that though SAM was unpolished in his manners, yet he had just notions of propriety, and never attempted to in-

* The coach was distinguished by a portrait of *Sam*, sitting by a bowl of punch, &c.

sinuate himself as connected with persons of rank. During the election, a certain elevated female character, was no less industrious in favour of Mr. Fox than SAM HOUSE. Though his canvassing duty led him to various perambulations through different parts of Westminster, he cautiously avoided going to that part of the city where he thought her Grace might be engaged upon the same business. The reason he assigned for this conduct, was, to prevent the malignant shafts of disappointed malice being pointed at her Grace by the hireling scribblers of the day, placing him in a nonsensical paragraph with such an amiable character. Yet, notwithstanding this studied caution, it cannot be thought surprizing, that during a forty day's campaign, that they should *once* happen to meet by mere accident.

SAM, though glorying in the friendly exertions of her Grace, yet his regard for propriety laid him under the necessity (as he called it) of acting in *masquerade*, and at once sacrifice his candour and sincerity—play the complete hypocrite by roundly telling a lie, in order to save her Grace from censure, in a certain morning paper, at all times eminent for scandal, and ready to catch the most trifling occurrence, in

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order

order to traduce the best character in the kingdom, for the *unpardonable* crime of befriending Mr. Fox.

It happened that her Grace of D——e, in company with two other ladies and one gentleman in the carriage, going down Wardour-street, came up with SAM in his usual singularity of dress surrounded by a few of his constant friends, a select party of *mobility*. The noise and huzzaing of SAM, and his assisting canvassers, occasioning the carriage to stop, the gentleman who accompanied her Grace looked out to enquire the cause; knowing SAM, he immediately beckoned him to the coach, in order to exhibit him to the ladies. When he came to the side of the carriage, the gentleman informed him, that her Grace of D——e was one of the party. SAM, on his first looking into the coach, observed her Grace; yet, to avoid any obloquy that might be thrown on her character, he, without hesitation, replied to the gentleman, in his rough way, “ d—n my eyes—none
 “ of your riggs—blast ye, don’t you think I
 “ know the Duchess well enough to find out
 “ that you tell a d—d lie. The Duchess, d—n
 “ ye, is not here—God bless her Grace, I know
 “ her well, and she knows me too—Blast ye,
 “ none

“none of your riggs upon me.”—With this salute, SAM took his leave, and joining his troops, pretended to inveigh against the gentleman for endeavouring to impose on him.

Thus, from a good principle, he told a palpable lie,—making himself appear in the instant both fool and knave, rather than subject her Grace of D——e, to paragraphical animadversions in party newspapers, or tavern conversations.

His hospitality had the power of magnetism while the election lasted, and drew people from all quarters of the town. When any who casually dropt in, were discovered to be electors who had not given their suffrages, he made instant application, requesting them to go with him to vote for his friend Mr. Fox. His aversion to ceremony led him to be very free with strangers as well as intimates. And when any of this *flying game* (as he termed it) apologized for their dress, he replied, “d—n your dress, come “along with me if your friends to Fox,” and, ordering a coach at his own expence, and accompanying them himself; in this manner he would take thirty or forty a day to vote for the Man of the People.

SAM was no respecter of persons when he was offended.

Sometime previous to the late dissolution of Parliament, at one of the monthly meetings at the Shakespeare, he attended with other Electors, and rendering himself conspicuous by his oaths and singular appearance; the Duke of Rutland, who was present, intimated a desire to speak to him. SAM was accordingly called towards the table, where his Grace sat, by Major Stanhope; who addressed him, with asking, if he could not converse without swearing? His reply was, "B—st your eyes, would you have a man speak in any other language but what he is master of?" This answer was final, and prevented a conference between two great men, his *Grace* and *Sam House*.

Proofs are not wanting to shew, that he was a man possessed of great courage. In addition to that of his jumping off the Bridge, the following will be sufficient.

His canvassing business brought him to the Hustings at Covent-Garden every day. At the beginning of the election, as he was passing Hood and Wray's *corner*, opposite the Hotel in King-street, in a coach, crammed with the fruit of his industry; on looking out at the window, he was
insulted

insulted by some of the sailors, and more coming to their assistance, they began to feel themselves bold ; at length one of the banditti made a blow with a bludgeon at SAM's bald head, which, had he not fortunately escaped, must evidently have killed him. SAM incensed at this extreme act of inhumanity, immediately exclaimed, " D—n your eyes, *you cowardly blackguards*, if " Sir Cecil's small-beer has made you valiant, " let the best of you turn out, and I'll fight " him." This produced a shout of applause from many of the spectators ; and SAM landed his corps in perfect safety at the hustings.

SAM's favourite candidate having obtained a great majority at the final close of the poll,— he considered this, as a complete victory over power, influence, and oppression, which gave him great satisfaction. All his anxiety, labour, and fatigue, during this contest, in the congratulations of his friends on the happy issue of the business, melted away like snow before the sun, and his cares were absorbed in the flowing bowl. Though of a strong constitution, yet as neither strength, wisdom, nor courage, can guard against accidents which may prove fatal, SAM got cold at the time of the election, which was followed by an inflammation in his bowels, attended with
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the most dangerous symptoms ; till nature, unable to resist the force of a complication of disorders, gave way to the all-conquering power of death, on the 23d of April, 1785.

Amongst a variety of whimsical peculiarities, it may not be inconsistent with the plan of the present biographical sketch, to state the following anecdotes.

Many years ago, SAM (in imitation, it is supposed of his old bottle companion and intimate acquaintance, Mr. Thomas, who lives at Hopwood's, near the King's-bench ; who has, for a long time, made use of his coffin as a corner cupboard, which he keeps well stored with rum and brandy, to be drank at his death) ordered a coffin to be made of wicker ; the men who were employed on this occasion, wishing to make the job last till they got another, living at SAM's expence, were very backward in constructing the lid. SAM discovering this, his patience being quite exhausted ; one day when they were drinking as usual, he exclaimed, " Get out of my house, you resurrection rascals ; I'll be d—d if you have me yet ;" and, dragging the coffin from under the bed, cut it in pieces, and threw it on the fire.

On the 8th of June, 1784, by the assistance
of

of his friend, Mr. Keys*, the Messenger (who was a strenuous supporter of Mr. Wilkes, dur-

* In the year 1734, Keys, then a boy, lived an apprentice at the Crown-tavern, Palace-yard, Westminster. In Sir Robert Walpole's administration, party spirit was carried to a very great height: Whigs and Tories had separate clubs in different parts of the town. At the above tavern, a club of *Constitutional Whigs* was held, the greatest part of whom were Members of Parliament. To illustrate the story, we must inform our readers, that three tailed wigs were then in fashion, and, *twig his wig* became a cant word. One day, when Sir Robert was returning from the House through Westminster-hall to his carriage, and on that day particularly, was guarded by some of the Members with swords drawn. Keys, among others, who spit in the Minister's face, glowing with the flame of liberty, and spirit of opposition, mixed in the crowd to express his detestation of the Minister. Just at the instant that Sir Robert was about to step into his carriage, a voice was heard, "*Twig his Wig.*" It was no sooner said than done; Keys taking the hint, pressed forward, and snatching the Minister's wig from his head, he threw it among the mob, to the diversion of thousands. Being well known, he was soon after taken up by a warrant, but his *Worship*, before whom he was taken, *leaning* to the side of opposition, considered it as a boyish trick, and discharged him.

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ing that gentleman's popularity, who then kept a tavern in Westminster, and ruined his circumstances through his honest, though mistaken zeal, for the good of Old England.) SAM revived the ancient club, called the *Constitutional Whigs*, which had laid dormant since the year 1734. The Grand Lodge was held at his house, and the whole together consists of near seven hundred members, many of whom are Electors of Westminster, and Freeholders of the county of Middlesex.

At one of these meetings, being appointed president for the night, he introduced a chairman in a livery great coat, as a worthy member; which gave offence to the company, who remonstrated against it as a degradation of their dignity. SAM insisted, that he should be admitted, and said, "He's an honest fellow, tho' his coat is of two colours; besides, and be d—d to ye, is it not sufficient that I recommend him?" But the company over-ruled the authoritative mandate of the president, which provoked him to such a degree, that he snatched the cap of liberty from his head—threw it among the members, and immediately retired.

KEYS and SAM were inseparable companions, united in the glorious cause of liberty, and
a bumper;

a *bumper* ; they took great pains to discover any who were falling off from their *political sincerity*, as well as those who they thought were trespassing on the Constitution, by attending smuggled meetings for illegal purposes. This was playing a "double game," as they called it ; and by one or the other of these two vigilant watchmen, when an opportunity offered, the offenders were sure to be told of their apostacy in the most public manner, and in the plainest language.

So attached was he to Mr. Fox ; that soon after the overthrow of the Portland Administration, on account of the East-India Bill, one afternoon, several strangers went to his house for the purpose of observing in what manner it affected him. SAM perceiving what spirit they were of, he refused to let them have any more liquor ; and, knowing the warmth of his own temper would lead him to treat them *roughly*, he sent in *Nurse*, who with all the patriotic fire of SAM, exclaimed, " You dirty *Pittites*, pay your reckoning, and " go about your business."

Though the following may appear trifling, yet as they are traits of a benevolent disposition, we doubt not, but they will prove acceptable to those, who are interested in the happiness of mankind.

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A few months before he was taken ill, he observed a poor child often wandering in the streets, near his house, whose parents he found upon enquiry were extremely indolent, insomuch that the child was neglected, and want stared him in the face. After some questions which were answered to his satisfaction, he took the boy under his protection, and finding him industrious, which was quite a virtue with SAM, he clothed and placed him apprentice to Mr. Webb, locksmith, opposite his own house. The boy answered his expectations, and SAM declared himself happy to have lived to see it.

He took in two or three newspapers for the amusement of those who frequented his house. Sometimes, when he went into the tap-room in the morning, and saw an indigent customer reading the paper, whom he thought had more need to mind his business; he would, d—n his eyes, and ask him what had he to do with newspapers, adding, “ You had better go home and work; politics wont fill your belly.” This address, however impertinent, was not taken ill from him, and generally followed by a present of part of SAM’s dinner.

As a mark of SAM’s attachment to Keys, whom he called “ his tried friend,” about a month

month before his death, he sent for Major Labalier, and desired Keys also to attend. When they waited upon him, SAM observed to Keys, that he should be miserable if he thought he would live to want, and as a token of his regard, desired he would accept of £.20 a year out of his estate in Grosvenor-street. Keys thanked him for his good wishes; but glowing with the same independence of mind as his friend Sam House, nobly refused it, telling him his friendship was disinterested; and therefore he would not accept of that, to which his family had a superior claim.

During his illness, he was attended by Sir John Elliot and Dr. Hall; as also by Mr. Wyatt and Mr. Wright, surgeons.

A few hours before his death, Sir John Elliot, informed Mr. Fox of his dangerous situation. Mr. Fox immediately went to see him, and sat by his bed-side a considerable time. The conversation that took place cannot be faithfully reported; but it is natural to suppose, that SAM held fast his political integrity, and requested Mr. Fox not to desert the interest of his country. Mr. Fox's assurances we know not, but certain it is, this visit gave him a temporary relief.

When he was gone, SAM expressed great pleasure, in having seen his friend, the champion of Freedom, and said, that Mr. Fox took him by the hand, treated him with great tenderness, and hoped he should see him better when he called again. In half an hour, *poor* SAM changed, and entirely lost his speech; and about six hours after breathed his last, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

Thus ended the life of a man, who, notwithstanding his foibles, follies, and immoralities, possessed many public and private virtues.—As no character is without a blemish,—by viewing the faults of others, we should thereby correct our own, and carefully avoid every species of vice which we discover in other men; at the same time not neglecting to imitate those actions that are praise-worthy.

The news of his death no sooner spread abroad, than people of all descriptions went to see his corpse. At first they only admitted his particular friends; but the Monday following the crowd was so great, that necessity compelled them to give admission to all who came, without distinction. It is said upwards of five hundred persons viewed the dead body.

The day and hour being fixed for the funeral ceremony

ceremony to take place, the streets and lanes leading to Wardour-street, exhibited a motley assemblage of men, women, and children.

On Friday the 29th of April, at 6 o'clock in the evening, the procession began as follows :

Two conductors with staffs and sashes,
Bearer with state head and feathers ;
Hearse and four horses, attended by six pages
with caps and truncheons ;
Coach and four horses with chief mourners,
Coach and four horses with united friends.

Constitutional Whigs, Grand Lodge.

Two standard bearers.

The most *Noble Briton* with the ensigns of his office, *i. e.* the arms of the Prince of Wales, Duke of Portland, Duke of Devonshire, Earl Fitzwilliam, and Earl of Derby.

Two vice-presidents, each decorated with a star and ribbon.

Treasurer with a star, carrying King William's key, with the impresson of William and Mary.
Gentleman Usher, and the Conservator, each with a star, &c.

Secretary with a star, and cross pens in silver.
Staff officer, with the intrepid Fox, treading upon slavery.

Brothers,

Brothers, following two and two, in their blue and buff uniform.

The rest of the members of the five United Lodges, two and two, in mourning.

The Tyler of the Lodge, with the chain of slavery *.

The procession moved slowly down Princes-street, the Haymarket, round Charing-cross, along the Strand, and up Bedford-street. When it arrived at Covent-garden; to add to the *solemnity of the scene*, the procession went round the church to the north-gate. After the funeral service was performed, the body was deposited in the church-yard by the side of his wife, and a former favourite.

* To turn the whole into ridicule, a drunken watchman of St. Ann's, Soho, who was hired to personate the deceased, in a dress exactly similar to SAM's when alive, joined the procession, which occasioned not a little controversy among the populace, whether he was really SAM or not. His folly, however, was presently punished, for being guilty of some irregularities during divine service; after the body was deposited in the ground, the mob handled him very roughly, and forcing him into the hearse, ordered the coachman to drive to the Undertakers.

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The most popular character, whose remains have been honoured with a public funeral, scarce ever collected a greater concourse of people than were seen on this occasion. The streets and windows were crowded with spectators, and not less than five thousand persons were present near the place of interment.

He left to his son the following property :

An estate in Grosvenor-street, let at £. 100 *per annum*.

The house in Wardour-street, in which he died, since let at £. 50 *per annum*, and £. 280 good will for a lease during a certain term of years.

Plate, to the value of £. 150, and household furniture, out of which the only legacies to be paid are £. 20 a year to NURSE, and £. 20 a year to her daughter.

*The day after his funeral the following Epitaph
appeared in the Public Advertiser.*

SAM HOUSE is dead ! and laid in dust,
As ev'ry mortal fabric must ;
No matter how well built and stout,
He's fall'n !—alas, his *lease* was out.
Ye bands in blue and buff array'd,
Lament your *House* in rubbish laid ;
That 'erst so open and so free,
Stood up for Fox and Liberty.
A House he was, well known to some,
Where wit and mirth were quite at home ;
Rough-cast indeed and unadorn'd
In native warmth secure, he scorn'd
Alike the *fretted* and the *gilt*,
And other fancies modern built.
Th' asylum of unfriended merit,
He harbour'd more of Freedom's Spirit,
Than gorgeous palaces have bred,
Or domes that bear a roof of lead.
But ah ! at last poor SAM is down,
And Fox has lost a *House* in town.
No party fullen death espouses,
The great demolisher of *Houses* ;

And

And if an *aspect North* he bore,
 Perhaps would not have spar'd him more.
 His *timbers* worn (with grief I tell it)
 Spite of the carcase-mason Elliot;
 And ev'ry masonry beside,
 Gave way at length to time and tide.
 His *garret* once with gimcracks stor'd,
 No more shall hearty glee afford;
 That *garret* that display'd before ye,
 Enough to furnish many a *story*.
 Then let the *House* in quiet lie,
 And pass his *ruins* with a sigh;
 Nor Fox from Covent-Garden Husting,
 Disturb the cell they've laid his dust in.
 Until that great concluding day,
 That *builds* afresh the sons of clay;
 He then refitted and *rejoic'd*,
 His cheerful *front* once more shall hoist;
 And shew unclogg'd with rubbish foul,
 The *lodging* of an honest soul.

N. B. Mr. HOUSE was member of almost every
 society or club of Note; he was the first member of
 the *Constitutional Whigs* Grand Lodge, a member of
 the Grand Lodge of Druids, Loyal Britons, Royal
 Falconers, Coufens, Hibernians, &c. &c.

F I N I S.



